

***Here are a few tips for introductions. Remember that these tips will not work for every debate. Be flexible and use your judgement as to what is required in any particular debate.***

**1st speakers:**

- Before launching into the definition, team line and team split, remember to spend some time (not too long) giving some context to the debate. Explain why the issue to be debated is so important or current. Answer the question, 'why are we debating this topic now?'. Point to any new developments on the issue.
- Remember when it comes to definition, the important thing is to clearly identify the issue to be debated. Don't be afraid to state clearly, "The issue of today's debate is xyz."

**2nd speakers:**

- Always begin with rebuttal. If you can sum up your opposition's misunderstanding in one proposition, then do that.
- Prioritise your rebuttal so that the most contentious points come first. Give the audience and the adjudicator the impression that you've just grabbed the debate by the neck and dragged it back to your side.

**3rd speakers:**

- Your introduction must show that you have a good perspective on the debate.
- Try beginning by summarising the opposition's (flawed) approach to the issue, and you (correct) approach to the issue.
- Contrast the two approaches, and in a nutshell, explain why your approach is better.

And finally, a few helpful tips that apply to all speakers;

1. Take a deep breath before standing up. This helps you to relax and clear your mind before beginning your speech. Good speakers often have a good sense of perspective on the debate, and this is more easily if you are relaxed.
2. Towards the end of the previous speaker's speech, start thinking about how you will make your introduction.

3. Ask your team mates not to make suggestions about rebuttal etc just before you stand up. Often, their suggestion will not sink in, and may confuse and distract you.

4. Don't be afraid to create a sense of theatre. Begin your speech as though you are in command of the stage - bit don't go over the top!

5. Don't make clichéd remarks. Adjudicators have heard them all before, and let's face it, they are neither witty nor entertaining.

6. Prepare an introduction, but be flexible. Good introductions are ones that relate and respond directly to what the opposition are saying.